Mat-Su Monitor

October 2012

New Nursing Facility to Open Doors at MSC

The new wing on Snodgrass Hall will provide more space for paramedic and nursing classes. It will open for the spring 2013 semester.

By Gary Haag

Get ready, because here it comes. Next spring semester, here on the Mat-Su campus, is a much needed Paramedic/ Nursing Program Lab and Classroom Addition. Worth over $2.5 million, the new facility is located near the rear of the Snodgrass building.

According to Talis Colberg, the Director of Mat-Su College (MSC), the new facility is conveniently located near the hospital, strengthening the college's relationship with the Mat-Su Regional Hospital as a learning facility for our Nursing and Paramedic students.

In addition, Colberg reported that for several years the Mat-Su Borough has provided $100,000 to the Mat-Su College paramedic program. This joint partnership has generated seed money that will go towards the goal of supporting the community and will help by training people for good paying future jobs.

Adding to the story, Director of Administrative Services Harlen Harmon provided more details: The Mat–Su Borough is donating an ambulance body for the paramedic

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Low Bid Yeilds Paved Parking

Due to the competiveness of the contractors bidding for the job of building the nursing wing, the college had extra money to expand the Snodgrass parking area.

This new expansion will add 86 new parking spaces, 51 on the east side of Snodgrass and 35 on the west side of the new facility.

Harlen Harmon commented, "Parking is a priority issue." In addition, the 51 new parking spaces on the east side will be paved as well as a walk way, complete with hand rails.

As a result of these considerations, not only will accessing the campus be safer for students, but also easier to maintain.

When asked how the construct-ion budget is going, Harmon said "Excellent." When all is said and done, the total cost is expected to be $2.5 million. This "Health Science Expansion" makes it obvious that the goals of this college are to provide the public with the highest quality of training and education for the student that seeks these opportunities.

Candidates Convene

By Robert Christenson III

October 4th saw the fifth consecutive candidates' forum hosted by Mat-Su College.

It was a decent turn-out, relative to the dismal nature of general local interest in what can arguably be considered junior politics on a national scale at best.

But it was an event, by golly, and, while one or two candidates brought along competition-strength rhetorical cogence, most came prepared at least to divvy out their weeks' worth of supplemental politician gestures, which are always captivating and seldom unappreciated.

The purpose of the forum was to present the panel with questions posed by Mat-Su College affiliates—drawn from a hat roughly every other response by the forum moderator, Denise Reeve.

Jamey E. Duhamel (standing) is running for State Representative District 6. Lynn Gattis (seated) is running for State Representative District 9.

While certainly diverse, not all inq-uiries met the cold definition of 'worthwhile', namely, Is it ever right for a politician to lie? In the context of an open forum, if a politician's answer to such an anti-grilling is anything other than "bloody hell, to the furthest star and then light-

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Donate Food This Holiday Season

By Jake Magoon

Every Thanksgiving, millions of American families sit down and celebrate those things in life that are most important: food, shelter, family, and love.

But, did you know that many families do not have the resources necessary to enjoy a Thanksgiving meal? In fact, according to Feeding America, a network of 200 food banks and the largest hunger charity in the country, 1 out of every 6 Americans lives in a state of "food insecurity", including 1 out of every 4 American children.

For these individuals and families, Thanksgiving is an undoubtedly foreign experience from that to which most of us are accustomed.

These circumstances are not limited by age, gender, race, ethnicity, or political affiliation, and can be found in every community across America, including our own. It is because of the reality of hunger in America that a

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Mat-Su College
University of Alaska Anchorage

Explorations on the Juneau Icefeild

By Karen Dillman and Polly Bass

The Juneau Icefield, North America's fifth-largest at 5,000 square miles, is more than the obvious rock and ice. Rocky islands surrounded by ice called nunataks contain well-adapted and often unique vegetation within the icefield boundary.

Some localities are considered paleonunataks, which are present day localities previously isolated by glacier ice, but are now less isolated due to ice free terrain between the landmass of the mainland and contiguous ice free land within the icefield.

One possible paleonunatak, Paradise Valley (33 miles NW of Juneau at 58.798 N and -134.502W) is of interest to researchers with the Juneau Icefield Research Program (JIRP) who have studied the icefield since 1946 (http://www.juneauicefield.com/).

This year, the Tongass National Forest Botany Program and the JIRP collaborated in scientific explorations of Paradise Valley. Approximately 800 years ago, the majority of the Juneau Icefield is presumed to have been completely ice covered during the Little Ice Age.

The work of this year's reconnaissance expedition was aimed at deciphering in greater detail the evidence for the valley being ice free during the Little Ice Age. This evidence may be present in the substrate record, the geomorphological record, and in the vegetation present today.

Beyond this objective, the aim was to also obtain botanical knowledge from a previously unexplored area with a unique geologic history, with the hopes of finding rare plant populations.

Greater knowledge of rare plant species and their habitats allows the Tongass National Forest to monitor, regulate and protect habitats within similar subalpine and alpine areas in review of special use permits and other development projects.

The valley lies at about 2,500-ft. elevation and is 1.5 miles long. The Bucher Glacier borders the north

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Professor Polly Bass at the feild camp.

Forum

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to the furthest star and then light-years beyond it, no, not ever," that that politician is unofficially, yet confirmedly, disqualified from winning an office seat of any kind if enough people are paying attention.

The more provoking questions were, thankfully, at a statistical advantage, ranging from what the panel thought about the pebble mine to how they felt about abortion, the latter escaping the hat during Jamey Duhamel's turn.

"As a state, we have no right to legislate morality," she replied. "I feel that any choice a woman makes is a personal decision between her family and her doctor. The government should stay out of it."

Eric Feige was given the opportunity to disagree, but he declined, apologizing to fellow republicans for harboring the same opinion as his democratic adversary.

The most controversial remark, though, came out of Fred Dyson's closing statement, which was dedicated entirely to the subject of abortion. "The first right, in my view," he began, "is to live. If you think that something magical happens to a child on its way out of the birth canal—and somehow it becomes a human being [at that point]—that's a religion. That's not based on science. Some of you may think that children come from a stork; I've got to tell you that isn't true."

He then went on to compare abortion to slavery—which, of course, was to compare pro-choice, pregnant women to slave-owners. (Reading over that implication for a twentieth time, I'm still confident that it isn't being taken unfairly out of context.) Peculiarly, his position wasn't based on science, either.

A similar point of interest was Charlie Huggins' response to the question of how the legislature can address the issue of Alaska's increased rate of suicide: "If you look at the background for suicide in particular, it probably takes place in dysfunctional families, largely."

This remark alone seemed to put Huggins out of touch with the subject matter, as suicide is rooted in neural

Click Bishop (standing) is running for State Senate District C. Blake A. Merrifield (seated) is running for State Representative District 9.

dysfunction, which has a myriad of causes; if just one of many risk factors is addressed, the rest suffer naturally from neglect. "I think it spans across the spectrum," he elaborated, "that people have to have hope. Feeling that somebody recognizes who you are, and having some expectation of contributing positively to society, gives you reinforcement."

This was a step in the right direction, albeit a wobbly one since the referenced spectrum includes manic-depression and schizophrenia—diseases benefitting most, if not solely, from medicinal therapy.

Even then, positing that unhappy people should start feeling happy isn't exactly conclusive. Sometimes it's better to simply pledge one's commitment to further research.

Overall, it was a telling one-hour-thirty, yielding unanimity regarding more pressing topics like resource development and education.

All agreed that job creation is a perpetual priority, but that all angles of every action should be considered as part of the process, and none took to undermining the importance of the competitive acquisition of knowledge. Promising.

Student Government Update

By Denise Reeve

The Mat-Su College Student Government Council members (MSC SGC), your student leaders, have worked diligently to increase the connection between them and you, the student.

This year, for the first time, you can access the SGC via the official SGC web page, which in turn allows direct access to the many clubs and their activities on campus.

On the SGC webpage, you can simply click on the individual club icon of interest to you and you will be taken to that club's web page.

The club page also has a link to the Club Event Calendar which shows every meeting time and the room number where they are held. Should you wish to join a specific club, simply complete the form available on each of the clubs' web pages.

Why would someone choose to participate in student leadership? Service in the MSC SGC looks excellent on one's resume. Student leadership can open doors for you, students not only learn leadership skills, but connect to the network of faculty, staff, and students here at Mat-Su College. Lastly, the events, experiences, and friendships are fun!

MSC Student Government Council offers excellent leadership opportunities. The SGC is comprised of senators, club representatives, executive officers, as well as faculty and staff advisors.

If you have ideas for fun or educational events you would like to see happen on campus please visit the council and check us out. Meetings are every Wednesday from 11:50am to 12:50pm in FSM 105.

Phi Theta Kappa Update

By Denise Reeve

Have you walked by the Phi Theta Kappa bulletin board lately? If not you should check it out, you will want to see if YOUR NAME is on OUR list.

Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) is the largest international honor society in the world. PTK invites exceptional students to join their ranks twice during the year.

Membership in PTK has perks you may
not be aware of, as PTK is first and foremost a group of students who work just as hard as you do, students who are motivated, and have the drive to succeed.

PTK membership offers opportunities to learn leadership skills. Leadership, scholarship, fellowship, and service are the hallmarks PTK has adopted as its focus.

Membership in PTK affords the excellent student access to additional scholarship opportunities; these are based on merit and are offered only to PTK members.

PTK is available only to two year college students who have achieved academic success. Our chapter also offers local speaker events, regional training, and networking opportunities.

Phi Theta Kappa, a prestigious organization, often can open doors for you. Once you choose to become a member, you are a member for life. If you are a student seeking to complete a bachelor's degree or higher, PTK on your transcript shows transfer colleges your successful college career. Many colleges offer additional scholarships simply because they want students of the PTK caliber.

Our local chapter, the Beta Sigma Epsilon chapter, is hosting a Spring Conference for the state of Alaska October 13, right here on the Mat-Su College campus.

We are currently looking for students who want to become members of the Phi Theta Kappa (Beta Sigma Epsilon Chapter). If your name is on our list, this is your opportunity! You have nothing to lose and everything to gain: where will PTK take you?

The Mat-Su College chapter of Phi Theta Kappa (the Beta Sigma Epsilon chapter) meets every Thursday in JKB 128 at 12 noon.

Club Update: We the People

By Jake Magoon

"We The People" is a new student club on Mat-Su College, and we are all about YOU!

Founded upon the notions that we are stronger united than divided, and that we all have far more in common than we think, We The People is a student club with the fundamental purpose of bringing people together in order to create greater understanding within the community, and with that, advocate for issues that are important to us.

Have you ever wondered why things are as they are? Are you tired of shallow, stifling, empty cynicism? Are you sick of the fake and ready for something real?

If so, stop by JKB 128 at 2:30 PM on Wednesdays, though we may be moving to the Atrium shortly…speak to President Jake Magoon, Staff Advisor Kim Hayes, Veterans Club President Chad Stone, Secretary Keelan Mangus, Vice President Shain Miller, and others, to find out what we're all about.

Determined to break down the atomization, isolation, and alienation experienced by individuals in contemporary society, We The People welcome all who wish to join, judge no one, and would love to for you to be our newest friend. An open mind is the only prerequisite!

We have no tests, and we apply no labels. Do you have an issue that is important to you, but think that, because it is so personal (and thereby, so important) that the established outlets for your voice won't consider it to be worth their time?

If something is important to you, it is important to all of us, and odds are good that we can relate. No discussion is off limits, from school life to home life, from transportation to the media, all views are welcome.

We may have been told that we're too apathetic, too unrealistic, too incompetent, or too idealistic, but that doesn't mean we have to believe it. We break stereotypes and create new moulds. If you believe as we do that "We can do better", the first step on the road to working together is overcoming fear and rebuilding trust.

And we're about more than just talk, we act as well. Our soon-to-be-filled club bulletin board shall soon have an anonymous drop-box, suitable for Post-Secret style submissions.

Aware of the approaching Thanksgiving season, we will be hosting a Thanksgiving feast the Wednesday prior to Thanksgiving, done with those students who may not have a full Thanksgiving in store at home in mind.

Lastly, if you have concerns about real-world problems you'd like to see addressed, come to us, and who knows…you might just change something.

What's Wrong With Us: Part I The Media

By Jake Magoon

The idealized vision of our news-institutions is as dashing as it is charming in its utterly simple naïveté.

Here is how it is supposed to work: from the CEO at the top of the news company, to the editor, to the beat reporter on the street, the more important information is to our society and species as a whole, the greater the incentive to get the scoop.

Hard working and honest, our free press is how we know we're free, and its feisty independence serves as one of the cornerstones of our democracy, responsible for keeping our politicians in line.

Informed by the courageous news media, we, the informed voting public, elect our decision-makers based upon the rational weighing of the most important issues of our time. Should a particular set of policies fail to produce adequate results, or should corrupt relationships exist between politicians and wealthy business interests, our free press will be there, ready to take on the task of bringing these nefarious circumstances to the stern scrutiny of a voting public with high expectations. Fully informed, we rational actors take our politicians to task and replace them with worthier people.

Beautiful in its simplicity, these checks and balances serve not only to keep the system healthy, but, written as they are into the very script of our ideological narrative, this story even has the benefit of freeing us from the burden of thinking about how much of it is actually true.

Alas, even the most elegant and reassuring dreams end upon the sound of the alarm clock. Please, don't misunderstand – a press free of government interference is an essential component of human liberty, and ought to be both cherished and protected. But, just how free is our press, and does a press free of government censorship mean we have that essential independent press, determined to bring us the important news we need to hear whether we wish to hear it or not?

In 1983, 50 media corporations in the United States owned 90% of the television and radio media consumed by Americans. By 2011, the number of media corporations that control 90% of television and radio media consumed by Americans had fallen to just 6. In the context of human history and the old adage regarding the corrupting influence of power, this…seems a bit dicey. Are we positive they have our best interests at heart?

The truth of the matter is that, at this point, whether they have our best interest in mind or not is irrelevant. It is irrelevant precisely because we do know how the media operates. Even the most idealistic, incorruptible modern journalist must confront the fact that we no longer live in a predominantly literate society, but rather a society based upon spectacle and magical thinking.

Faced with falling advertising revenue, aging demographics, and an audience that increasingly self-selects their sources of "news" based upon the likelihood of being told what they want to hear (as opposed to what they need to hear), Today's media no longer operates with the luxury of printing what the public needs to hear whether they want to hear it or not.

Though this is certainly not true for every media outlet, these limiting effects on much of the media seems to also have a limiting effect upon the imaginations of the people consuming that media.

It works like this: imagine you are on the editorial board of a major news company. Meeting after a recent round of layoffs, you've fired the expensive, investigative old guard, and now have a paper consisting of close to 50% advertisements and 50% articles.

In terms of the articles, it has been agreed, in order to stay competitive with flashier forms of media, that the stories will now emphasize sensationalism over substance, and all articles are to no longer be written at a 12th grade reading level, but are to henceforth be written at no more than an 8th grade reading level.

Do we suppose an article exposing corruption, but displeasing advertisers, would get very far in such a desperate environment? It is not long after desperation and obsession with the bottom-line become the norm that many topics important to the public but upsetting to powerful interests become but a distant memory.

And as such, with the "Overton Window" defined in the public imagination by the media, the scope of "serious, respectable" opinion becomes defined, and the public imagination stifled and limited with it. It is by this process that our free press censors itself.

Mat-Su Monitor

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To Pass or to Fail?

ByAriel Sizemore

Is it the students who are failing, or are we failing the students? The graduation rate of college students continues to fall. Gary A. Rice, associate vice provost for institutional research at the University of Alaska Anchorage, reported that the University of Alaska Anchorage had a 24.6 percent graduation rate in 2011.

Frequently, full-time freshmen in Alaska never return to school for a second year. We are not alone in this widespread problem. The national average success rate is 53 percent according to the Q4 2007 statistics.

Financial pressure is the leading reason for students dropping out, but following close behind is academic disqualification. This problem continues to grow and needs to be addressed.

Let me share with you a story about a boy and his professor. I see this boy all the time in the learning center working hard to grasp the concepts of math by getting help from a tutor.

One day while I was in the learning center the boy asked his professor, "What do I have to get on the final to receive an A in the class?" The boy had an 88 percent accumulative grade in the class already, but the professor insisted that he should be figuring out what it would take to maintain a B in the class.

The boy sunk into his chair with discouragement and used the equation he was given to calculate what he needed to score for an A in the class anyway. Upon finishing, his professor walked over to him and said, "Over a 100 percent right? You think you're going to get that on the final?" He strutted away laughing as the boy's dreams were being crushed.

I can barely describe the defeated feeling in the learning center that day, and it took everything I had to stand up and walk out. Our staff and fellow students should do everything they can to encourage and help others; leaving them with hope and motivation.

I can't imagine how many students have been in that position, but worried about passing, failing, or maintaining a certain GPA.

Discouragement can literally break a student's spirit and is very deadly. It comes in many forms such as the lack of ability to find funding, academic disqualification, and stress. I Interviewed Associate Vice President Saichi Oba of the University of Alaska about the college student drop-out rates and he said, "the term that is more prevalent now is a stop out."

A stop out is where the student discontinues attending college for a period of time and possibly returns later. According to Saichi Oba there are many reasons students "stop out" of college such as academic ineligibility, which can be a combination of work, financial, family, and health care obligations. He also stated that, "the student is usually facing multiple factors which keeps them from going to school."

What is being done to keep students motivated to stay in school? There are outreach programs, to promote good grades and study habits, for the future students that plan on pursuing a higher education. Saichi Oba explained that, "It begins earlier than college; we try to make sure that

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The national average college success rate is 53 percent

New Facility

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program, estimated at $100,000 dollars. This will allow the students to benefit from training in an actual, fully equipped ambulance, as well as a variety of high-tech equipment. Once completed, the college will move both the existing nursing and paramedic programs to their new location and repurpose the existing classrooms for other uses.

Inside the walls of this $1.8 million facility, students will find a paramedic lab classroom, an ambulance bay, and an office; likewise, students will find a nursing lab classroom equipped with three patient beds, each with wrap-around curtains and a resource library. Jointly, students will share a change and shower room as well as storage areas.

According to Professor of Paramedic Technology Kathy Griffin, the new addition will provide an ambulance bay with a fully equipped ambulance. The ambulance bay is also equipped with a large video screen, allowing students to experience actual situation videos from start to finish.

Equally important is the simulated (sims.) human. The paramedic program is equipped with two adult, one infant, and one child sims. With these devices, students can practice real life scenarios. This year, iPads were added to the classroom setting, increasing the ability for students to interact and have on the spot access to research and internet medical sources.

In addition, Associated Professor of Nursing Carol Nash at UAA states "There is a real possibility an extra cohort will be added in the future." At present, eight Mat-Su students are selected every other year. Mat-Su College based students will complete a two year program making it possible for them to become licensed registered nurses.

The nursing portion of the new facility is equipped with a sims lab and observation room specially designed with a one-way mirror allowing students to see real life scenarios and instructors the opportunity to observe their student in real time.

The new facility will also have video conference ability, giving the paramedic students the opportunity to interact with experts, doctors, instructors, and any other participants from other locations around the state or nation. Griffin has put great emphases "on the increasing interaction and understanding between Nurses and Paramedics as part of the health care team."

The nursing portion of the new addition will provide learning opportunities not currently available at MSC. The nursing program at the MSC is one of UAA outreach cohort of nursing study. Twelve others exist throughout Alaska, which includes much online learning in their curricula. Traditional nursing students and our main campus in Anchorage also continue efforts to acquire AAS, BS, or MS degrees in nursing.

The floor plan for the for the new nursing and paramedic wing at Mat-Su College is revealed. Pictured are nursing and paramedic students and thier professors, Carol Nash and Kathy Griffin.

A Variety of Clubs Found at Mat-Su College

By William J. Scott

Mat-Su College isn't limited to books, grades, and the drive home: many of our students and staff have banded together to make this campus into more than a mere learning factory, but rather a true community. Listed below are but a handful of the student-run clubs we have on campus; check them out, make friends, and have fun!

Dance club

This will be Dance club's second year, so I am very excited to see how many people join this year. The time we will be meeting is 11am to 12pm Monday and Thursday in FSM 105.

Our goals for this semester are to get T-shirts and stickers plus hold a school dance and get ready to do a show case next semester.

The first dance we will be learning is the waltz, after which we will hold a vote to determine the following dance we will learn. We are looking for all officers and new members so if you are interested contact me at backwoodsthem@yahoo.com or go to the student club web page on the Mat-Su College site.

Metl Hedz

Metl Hedz is a club that promotes working with metal; they require that you have three credits or more to join. Their room is 209 FSM, their meeting times are Thursday 1-6:45pm, which also serves as the time for their lab. "We are very loud, so if you are on campus on Friday and hear a lot of noise it is most likely us." List of officers: President - Andrea Bennett, V.P - Denise Reeve, Alternate Representative - Cameron weeks, Secretary - Andrea Bennett, Treasurer - Alio Fan, Club Advisor - Felicia Desimini.

An established club, they are always looking for new officers and members. Metl Hedz plans to present an all metal art show this school year. Due to their noise level it is hard to maintain their lab time so this club is essential for all the metal classes.

Medieval Combat Club

Medieval combat club is a young club "that's purpose is to bash people in an academic setting," accomplished via a wide range of foam weaponry.

Their meeting place is the FSM parking lot, so if you see a mock battle fear not. If you wish to watch or participate in said battle, their combat time is Monday 4-6pm and Thursday 2:30-4pm.

Visitors do not need to worry about bringing their own weapons, but if you wish to wear custom armor and use custom weapons, feel free to bring your own.

In addition to the battles, there will be armor and weapon workshops at an as of yet undetermined point in the future. If you wish to know more about this full contact sport, visit www.dagorhir.com to discover what they are all about.

Vet Assist Club

The Vet Assist Club is an on campus club that strives to "provide additional opportunities to learn for the students and the veterinary community."

Though they have yet to set a time and place for their meetings, they have promoted the veterinary program whilst attending the Alaska State Veterinary state wide meeting. If you wish to join, contact Denise Reeve (Veterinary Club President) at ext 9759. Some of their accomplishments include the sponsoring of study events and statewide continuing education. The Vet Assist Club is looking for a secretary and representative for SGC. In addition, they are looking for visionary members to explore future direction involving the club and the community.

Japanese Club

The Japanese Club meets on campus, and their meeting times are Tuesday and Thursday from 4:30 to 6:45pm in FSM 105, and Wednesday in room 214 in the library.

Their purpose is to help students study, appreciate, and understand Japanese culture. For additional information, please contact Jonathan Jacobs at JOJacbs@acsalaska.net.

League of Gamers

The league of gamers is an unofficial club that meets on campus. They are into table top games such as D&D, and pathfinder.

The LoG currently has neither a staff advisor, nor a faculty advisor, though are actively looking for one.

Whether you'd like to have additional information about the clubs mentioned here, or discover the many other student clubs Mat-Su College has to offer, go to the home page of the Mat-Su College website and click on the student clubs link.

Pass or Fail

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students understand what they need to do in high school to be competitive at the university."

At the Fairbanks campus students tend to "drop off" after their junior year, but at the Anchorage campus they stop coming after their first year. There are many projects in place to motivate students to plan ahead for college, but what is being done for the students already attending?

According to Saichi Oba there are placement tests, advising, and help available for those that are already enrolled. "The key is to reach them early because by the time they tell you they are in trouble it's probably too late," he explains.

The most recent numbers of graduation rates for the University of Alaska came from the UA in Review. The six-year graduation rate was 34 percent for those first-time full-time baccalaureate degree-seeking students, who were awarded any degree, certificate, or endorsement at University of Alaska that entered in Fall, 2004. This reflects over a 6 percent increase from the 28 percent that entered in Fall, 1998.

Saichi Oba suggested that attending part-time is not the most successful route and that students should think about taking fifteen credits. He would like to encourage students to apply early for financial aid, and to meet with an academic advisor about class scheduling. He states, "We want students to be much more deliberate."

Student loans can have an effect on the students as well. Students should be careful when using student loans. Saichi Oba thinks that, "student loan debt is a good debt, as long as you don't get in over your head."

Frequent problems presented to Mr. Oba are: credit transfers to other Alaska universities, courses they need aren't always available, and course sequencing issues. Course sequencing is an issue that Saichi Oba would like to see become more "transparent" and more "student centric". These can be all factors that put pressure on students causing them to take longer to graduate or simply throw in the towel.

Alaska is right on the cusp of the lower end of the scale compared to other universities' graduation rates, but at the "six-year level they are right in with the pack with other public universities." In order to improve this, the University of Alaska makes completing on-time a priority, and there is a "stay on-track" campaign being held to help students complete in a timely manner.

Is college a sink or swim area of life, or is there hope for everyone? Mr. Oba believes that most of the University of Alaska's staff has an encouraging view on the matter, yet others are stuck in their traditional way of looking at things. Students can have a hard time in school and might need help from their instructor.

Is extra credit an option? Mr. Oba has no comment on that question when it comes to a student passing or failing, even if it would directly focus on learning the material at hand. He does recognize that, "if a student is not doing well academically, then ultimately, that could lead to academic disqualification."

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Mat-Su College
University of Alaska Anchorage

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How to Apply:

Visit the Mat-Su College website:
http://matsu.alaska.edu/

Type in "Employment" on the MSC home page under the search option.

Select the link for "UAKJobs.com"

UAKJobs.com is the university system electronic recruitment process that allows applicants to search for employment opportunities based on location, job type or job posting #

If you need assistance:

Please contact
MSC Human Resources
at (907) 745-9725

The University of Alaska is an equal employment opportunity/affirmative action employer and educational institution. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. Applicants needing reasonable accommodation to participate in the application and screening process should contact the Mat-Su College Human Resource Services Coordinator at (907) 745-9725

Are You Afraid of Getting Old?

By Jake Magoon

This article is intended as both critique, as well as antidote.

This past August 29th, I turned 25 years old: a quarter of a century. By the time I was 22, I started seeing gray hairs here and there, so thoughtfully pointed out by my classmates at Mat-Su.

Nature broke the whole aging and death thing to me gently, though, as I quite like my grays, and daydreamed about it adding to my mystique should I succeed in achieving a mathematics PhD. However, for the past two years, something has been gnawing at my mind. Never in the forefront, this toothy adversary seemed to dwell in the background: dread.

Why must I change? Well friends, and especially my young friends, all of those corny middle-aged people we see: that is going to be us, but only if we're lucky enough to live that long.

Understand that we have no choice in the matter: we are going to wrinkle, and our backs and joints won't be quite what they used to be. While scary enough, this is not necessarily the biggest fear young people have about the approaching oldpocalypse. What if I become undesirable?

Young friends, and friends of mine who are young at heart, we do not have a choice about whether or not our bodies will age, but we do have a choice about how we will age.

I am filled with admiration for aging hippy couples [use your own example if this doesn't work for you] who have been together for 30-40 years. Loyal, loving, good natured, unpretentious, and completely self-accepting, they are grateful for the fortune of life, for the time we have, and do not torment themselves by fiending for lost youth.

> " Make the choice to free your mind: love yourself, be excited, and rock who you are. "

The women in particular: long gray hair in a ponytail, a bead necklace and a dress, these women are appealing for as long as they live.

As that was typed a moment ago, the force of your eye-rolls were so powerful as to disturb the space-time continuum, creating a portal and landing atop my computer desk with the robust sigh of the cynic.

But hear me out.

We have all seen select older actresses with sex appeal that cannot be denied (Elizabeth Taylor), but tend to explain this as a result of fame, and certainly not something the rest of us could pull off. Is this true?

Today, both women and men find themselves bombarded with a psychologically stunted image of beauty from the time they are infants. Magazines, movies, commercials, and music videos: the end result is the targeting of our insecurities and want of acceptance for an all-out propaganda assault, all for nothing more than profit.

This image, while beautiful for its time and in context, is but one part of human beauty that has been isolated and fetishized. What better method to cause anxiety in consumers, temporarily relieved only through the purchase of products, than to directly target our most sensitive, unavoidable, nature-determined insecurities? By declaring our fleeting youth to be the preeminent source of desirability, billions in profits are made.

Thankfully, we have living proof of its falsity: have you figured out what it is about aged starlets that causes us to "inexplicably" regard them as attractive?

If not, perhaps considering this old expression will help: "The sexiest part of a woman is her mind." This applies to men as well; did you know Stephen Hawking seduced his nurse?

» See Aging **Page 8**

Aging

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his nurse?

We all have a choice we can make, and it is a matter of perspective: we can attack our self-esteem and fail to love ourselves as we deserve, fall into the trap of the youth-beauty-ideal, and desperately cling one part of life that is supposed to grow into something else. We can live forever in the past, miss out on today, and awkwardly reject the gifts of the now in favor of a tragic, unnecessary lie.

Thankfully, there is another option open to us: sexiness and contentedness are products of loving yourself. The old hippy couple who have been together forever love themselves, and they're sexy because they ignore the narrow marketers' definition of beauty. Now is the smart time to accept and become excited about what is coming. Plan and love what's to come!

Rather than waste perfectly wonderful years of life mourning lost time, one can create dignified archetypes of attractiveness in the mind. I personally look forward to being old enough to pull off a Michael Caine, or even a Noam Chomsky.

The choice we face is whether or not we wish to reject the full-spectrum of our beauty, live with insecurity and low self-esteem, and cling to the past.

The healthy, natural alternative is to be excited about our changes, and the new looks and opportunities we'll have as we continue to grow and self-actuate.

If you like dying your hair and getting a piercing for a change up, then I am happy to inform you that you will have many years to show the world how unconquerably dignified and appealing you are.

The old hippy couple teaches us the true origin of our desirability, and how to go about living in these crazy times as a dignified person: self-love.

Make the choice to free your mind: love yourself, be excited, and rock who you are. The secret: beauty is not the property of youth. The source of beauty comes from inside of you, proven to us by people like Elizabeth Taylor and Morgan Freeman: their self-love brings out the beauty of who they are. If you break free of your mental chains and rock it, it will be impossible to miss.

Don't mourn the past or try to stem the tide; feel the joy of you and your body fighting on the same team.

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Icefeild

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entrance of the valley and is now more than 400 ft. below the first moraine.

The Gilkey Glacier borders the valley's southern end, where a stream exits the valley into a steep waterfall. While the geologists looked for clues of glacial history, we conducted botanical surveys.

We surveyed the rocky moraines of the Bucher Glacier, the east and central portions of the valley about halfway down to the Gilkey Glacier, and along the western slope and a lateral moraine of an unnamed hanging glacier to about 3,400- feet elevation.

Although initially no sensitive or rare plants were found during the surveys, we documented the presence of over 150 plant species in the valley and collected over 90 plant samples that are receiving closer examination at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. We also collected over 100 lichen species that are also being further examined.

Much of the vegetation was familiar to us, yet the plant assemblages were different than other alpine valleys in the region. For example, mountain ash (Sorbus sitchensis) and beauverd spirea (Spiraea stevenii) were two abundant shrubs in the valley aside from the willows (Salix ssp.). These thickets are heavily used as protective cover and browsed by the resident mountain goats.

Chest- height lady ferns (Athyrium felixfemina), false hellebore (Veratrum viridis) and myriad blooming wildflowers carpeted the rocky slopes of the valley between the talus slides.

Patches of mountain hemlock forest (Tsuga mertensiana) in the center of the valley and at the southern end may be the remnants of a glacier/ice surface forest. The ice is now absent, but the leaning trees remain.

Great excitement only displayed by botanists followed the discovery of moonwort (Botrychium neolunaria) on a moraine on the western slope of the valley. We hope to continue this partnership with JIRP in the future to help discover the glacial history and botanical treasures from Paradise Valley.

Survey Team

- Scott McGee, JIRP Field Director and Cartographer, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
- Paul McDaniel, JIRP soil scientist, Professor, University of Idaho
- Gary Linder, Geologist, Senior Advisor for JIRP
- Polly Bass, JIRP botanist, Assistant Professor, University of Alaska Anchorage, Matanuska Susitna College
- Karen Dillman, Ecologist, Tongass National Forest
- Helicopter logistics by Coastal Helicopter
- Justin Vernon and Alicia Stearns, Tongass National Forest flight managers

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Thanksgiving

Continued from page 1

Thanksgiving Basket Drive has been formed.

This Thanksgiving season, you have the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of everyday Americans, right here in your community. Sponsored by our own Dr. Ping-Tung Chang, and in association with Angelina Klapperich, Miss Alaska 2012, The Committee for Mat-Su College Thanksgiving Baskets has placed boxes across campus for the purpose of donating food to local hungry families.

In operation for over 16 years, donated Thanksgiving-themed food items are assembled into "Thanksgiving baskets" and delivered to the doorstep of local Alaskans. These Alaskans are selected via confidential nomination: simply nominate a family you know, including your own!

Participation is simple: nominate families and donate food to boxes you see on campus, in P.T.'s office in Snodgrass hall, or in Cheryl Page's office in student services. If you're not ready to stop the good works yet, sign up to help assemble and deliver the baskets!

The nomination deadline is November 16th. Nominations and questions can be sent to Dr. Chang at pfpc@uaa.alaska.edu. Have a Happy Thanksgiving!

-Food Donations-

Drop off donations in boxes located around campus or in Dr. Chang's office and Cheryl Page's office (student services)

Contact Dr. Chang at pfpc@uaa.alaska.edu for more information.

Artistic Revolution

By Felicia Desimini

Professor Desimini's Art Appreciation class met Wednesday, October 3rd, in the lobby of the Fred and Sara Machetanz Building as a transformative salute to imagination, creativity, play, and cue the drumroll: learning!

Students responded to several open questions: What if? Why not? What is holding you back? How much beauty do we encounter in our daily lives that we typically ignore? What speaks to our creative souls?

During the Flash Mob, students experienced the interdisciplinary intricacies of theater: performance, collaboration, poetry, comedy, drama, personal interaction, choreography, audience, and improvisation. They were engaged in their learning. They made magic and meaning as they consciously and unconsciously wove together their artistic experiences in front of Student Services.

During the class before the Flash Mob, students viewed and analyzed a video called "Caine's Arcade" about a lonely 9-year old boy who built a game arcade using his imagination and recycled cardboard in his father's brick and mortar auto parts store in an economically depressed area of Los Angeles.

There is no foot traffic on these streets, and the father's business becomes exclusively online. Caine waits for months on end for visitors to play his games while he adds to his arcade, and keeps his faith until someone (a film-maker) walks in. Caine asks the film-maker if he would like to play games: $2.00 for a lifetime pass to the arcade.

The film-maker, impressed with Caine's imagination and dedication to his project, creates a video which goes viral, and a Flash Mob is organized to bring to fruition Caine's dream. This Saturday, October 6th, the world-wide Cardboard Challenge celebrated the one-year anniversary of Caine's vision, imagination and creativity.

Like all artists, Mat-Su students built their celebratory contributions and performances from the point of "not knowing" and implemented a spontaneous "plan of action," in which they took a leap of faith.

There is a meta-narrative to the Mat-Su College Flash Mob, which incorporates Fluxus, Beat Generation Cafés, 1960's Happenings, and Street Art. Students asked themselves, "What if?" And they responded. They were responsible, met their deadlines, and thought critically about the questions posed to them.

They are learning how they learn, and learning to develop and implement these skills into our Mat-Su College community and the community outside our campus walls.

This project contributed significantly to their individual lives. So, it is much more than Art Appreciation -- this is Contemporary Art, this is real life.

Professor Desimini's Art Appreication class participates in a unique demonstration of interactive and performance art.

The Pink Panther

By Paul Broderson

If one is looking for an evening of entertainment and wishes to journey on a humorous escape from reality, it is highly recommended to attend the play The Pink Panther Strikes Again. Directed by DJ Rotach, this play meets and exceeds every expectation for a comedy production. Viewers will be leaving VPA smiling and quoting lines from the play, already reminiscing. The acting is great, the stage setting has intriguing, eye-catching elements to it, and the directing is both smooth and creative.

Since VPA is a local, non-profit organization, viewers might expect the acting found there to be somewhat amateurish. Not so with The Pink Panther Strikes Again. While some of the more minor roles are acted out with slightly stilted performances, all of the actors playing the main roles are spot on. "Chief inspector Clouseau's" (played by Ted Carney) bumbling actions and hilarious accent will have viewers rolling in their seats, demanding more. Carney has a positive stage presence that seems to allow his fellow actors and actresses to loosen up and fulfill their roles that much more effectively when they are around him.

Ronald Dennison (who plays the villain "Dreyfus") does a wonderful job as well. Striding around the stage with his thick mane of hair flying, Stephenson says his lines with such enthusiasm and timing that one would never guess this is his first performance. Another newcomer is Erin Carney, playing the seductive spy "Olga." She does a lovely job of it, with a great accent and beautifully timed lines. All of the other actors and actresses give solid performances overall, with the only slip ups happening when they started to laugh at something that was said, and frankly, who can blame them?

The set of the stage fit the pink panther theme to a T. The painters did a great job with the floor and the backdrops, and one could tell a lot of effort was put into it, with good effect. But the best part of it all was the double rotating stages. In between or during scenes, the stages could be flipped completely around to change the setting entirely, giving the production a lively, seamless feel to it. The lighting crew does a solid job, one example being the use of an eerie green glow appearing whenever the Doomsday Machine is present.

Considering this play was his directorial debut, it is obvious that DJ Rotach is a natural. During the whole of the production, the plot flowed smoothly and without a hitch. The way Rotach set up some of the scenes is creative and hilarious, and one could tell that it must have been a lot of fun to be a part of the making of this production. Rotach employs everything from slow-motion scenes to cross-dressing singers to… the rest is a surprise.

The Pink Panther Strikes Again was shown up to September 23rd. Located at Valley Performing Arts in Wasilla, it was a truly wonderful show. The enthusiasm of the actors and wonderfully humorous storyline (combined with everything else mentioned above) made this a very worthy play to see. Valley Performing Arts' next play is DEATHTRAP October 12th- November 4th. The parking lot will undoubtedly be full so try to arrive early; tickets can be found on VPA's website or at the door.

Locals Pub and Pizzeria, located on the Parks Highway, serves local brews and excellent pizza.

Restaurant Review: Locals Pub and Pizzeria

By Hattie Schmidtkunz

As a college student, I don't have a lot of time to sit down at a restaurant if I want some good pizza. Before class, I called Locals Pub and Pizzeria to pre-order a pizza for pick up. I wasn't expecting the restaurant, which just opened in the valley this summer, to be so accommodating to pick-up orders.

The business has a separate phone line, entrance, and desk just for people like me who enjoy their top quality pizza over some chemistry homework. I ordered the "Husky," a jazzed up pepperoni pizza with onions, tomatoes, olives, and mushrooms.

Several hours later, after class, I zipped over to Locals to pick up my pizza. Locals is just a few minutes away from the college on the Parks Highway, just past Wal-Mart on the left as you head into Wasilla.

The moose antler handles on the front door were a truly Alaskan touch that matched the rest of Locals' décor. Each booth has its own street sign over it, and patrons can choose their favorite Mat-Su Valley street to sit at.

For a Monday afternoon, Locals was quite busy. Most of the patrons were seated in the pub section, enjoying Locals' selection of beers from a number of different local breweries.

I picked up my hot 18 inch pizza for only $19.99 plus tax. The pizza was excellent. The crust was tasty, the vegetables seemed fresh and it wasn't too greasy as most take out pizzas are. To top it all off, the mushrooms, my favorite pizza topping, were thankfully not soggy. I definitely recommend stopping by Locals for a taste of good food.

The restaurant is open from 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. Hungry college students can call 357-3100 until 9:30 p.m. to order take out.

In addition to an extensive menu of pizzas and wings, Locals has a "create your own" option for people who like their pizzas just so. Locals full menu is available online at www.localspizzapub.com.

Good

By Micheal DiBattista

Greed, pride, wickedness, dark matters—
Are not all variations
On a single ladder
Of infinite machinations
That humanity uses to reach the heavens?

. . . What is in fact Good?
Is there one that upon which
All will agree? . . .
Or isn't it true
That when the Heart takes its due
The curse is not restraint but the right to be free?

Freedom at a cost
The cost always blood
But is there not more,
Perhaps the voice of the Good?
And again, what is "Good"
But the opposite of "Bad"
And what are those, but words—
Are we just "mad?"

Perhaps this dichotomy is just all "in our head"
And we should follow the words
Of the man that declared God dead.
. . . Or maybe, just maybe there is something true
And to find it one must be sure
To pay one's Heart its due.

For what else could be good?
Money, fame, power?
A title, a slip of paper, or the right
To say "I gave to the poor, I fed the sick?"
. . . Can one not enjoy these and still perpetuate the Fight?

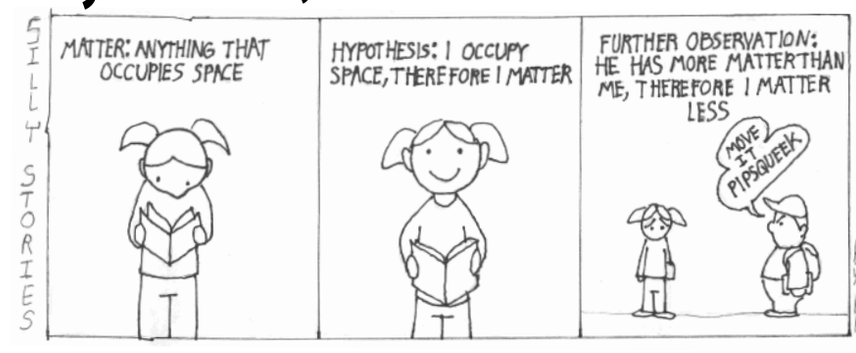
Even performing the one Good, one causes strife
For each one's heart is different, and the world
Rife with conflict.
The shackles that are called "freedom" then become heavy as lead
When the Heart takes its due
And we bury our dead.
There is only one good. That good is
To pay that due, to fulfill the desires of the heart.

To satisfy the body cannot be the Good.
The tangible and commonly malign already do this
Such things, simple things like food.
(Though not all may know this, and it pains this one to no end.)

The mind, perhaps, is closer to the Good.
Though mind
Only desires to rule. Truly, to climb atop a lofty tower
And lord over the world, for "Knowledge is power."
And though noble a cause, this is not the Good, one seeks to find.

To satisfy one's Heart is the only true Good. To help
Others in this cause is a way to achieve it for oneself.

Silly Stories by BP


SILLY STORIES
MATTER: ANYTHING THAT OCCUPIES SPACE
HYPOTHESIS: I OCCUPY SPACE, THEREFORE I MATTER
FURTHER OBSERVATION: HE HAS MORE MATTER THAN ME, THEREFORE I MATTER LESS
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